

Recommendation

77. The administrative, research and public accounting objectives of the parole program should be defined in measurable terms and data collection should be established accordingly.

Parole Data Collection Centre

A data collection system that would serve the purposes of management, research and public accounting must be established in the most economical and most efficient manner possible. One solution could be for each parole authority to be responsible for collection of its own data for all three purposes and an exchange of information with other users would be left to *ad hoc* arrangements. In the parole system we propose, this would mean a multiplicity of data collection centres and an inconsistency of collection which would not permit reliable comparisons. It would be an inefficient way of collecting the necessary information. The other solution is a central depository collecting information on the same basis from all parole jurisdictions. Such a depository would have to provide users with the necessary management, research and public accounting data as required. This would mean the ability to turn around quickly to feed information back to the user in a matter of weeks and sometimes days.

Recommendations on statistics in the Ouimet Report emphasized the research and planning purposes which call for high quality data. It was assumed that Statistics Canada would be the depository of criminal statistics.¹⁵ The Hugessen Report also dealt with the question of parole data and the need for a highly efficient system of data collection and distribution to monitor and service the numerous parole boards that it proposed. It suggested that the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Statistics Canada enter into an agreement to create a National Parole Institute.¹⁶

There is no doubt that data collection on parole decision-making should be centralized for higher efficiency and consistency. But such a data depository could be located wherever the necessary equipment and technical expertise are available. We do not believe that establishment of a system for parole purposes alone would be justified. Much of the data on parole clientele is the same as that collected in federal and provincial institutions. Duplication and, consequently, higher expense should be avoided. A parole data system should be part of a larger all-inclusive corrections data system. The central depository would have to deal with provincial institutions and parole authorities and collect information from the private and public agencies that have contracted to do parole supervision. It is economically indefensible to create more than one depository if a single operation could provide all users efficiently. At the moment, it seems that there is no agency which has either the mandate or the capability of providing information on the basis outlined above to the same extent as Statistics Canada.¹⁷

Recommendation

78. Statistics Canada should be charged with the responsibility for parole data collection, analysis and publication.